What Would Happen If Coaching Became Part of Your Church's Discipleship Culture?

River City Church

What I hope to accomplish.

1	Our Journey	Why we made coaching part of our discipleship culture, and what we discovered along the way.
2	Nuts and Bolts	The strategies and methods we implemented in our church.
3	Q&A	Good discussion and learning from each other.

Chat Question

What has been your experience on the topic of integrating coaching and discipleship in the Church?

A) New topic for me

B) I know some churches that have done this.

C) My church has done this.

The “Fit” Question

Where does coaching fit among all these other forms of help, and how will we explain the difference?

What do we mean by counseling?

What do we mean by mentoring?

What do we mean by discipleship?

What do we mean by coaching?

The language had to be simple enough for leaders to remember and careful enough to protect relationships.

Three forms of help

Simple contrasts that helped people recognize the posture they were taking.



Coaching

Person brings topic, experience, choices, and responsibility.

Coach primarily brings questions.

Person is the expert.



Mentoring

Person being mentored commonly brings questions. Mentor brings experience, perspective, and example.

Mentor's example is the expert.



Counseling

Person brings concern or need. Counselor brings professional training and an appropriate care process.

Counselor is the expert.

Three postures in the same situation

Same need. Different kind of help. Different kind of sentence.



Coaching

How do you plan to handle that?

What do you think you should do?



Counseling or guidance

Here is how this should be handled.

Here is the course of care I recommend.



Mentoring

Here is how I handled it.

Here is what I did.

The point was not to rank these postures. It was to become intentional about which one the moment required.

THEOLOGICAL CLARITY

Elephant In The Room

What about the authority of scripture?

Scripture is the authority ⟷ **The person owns the response**

Next Step

Chat Question

“What coaching tools can be responsibly given to every ministry leader, and what should remain within a trained coaching relationship?”

Chat: How would you respond in two or three sentences?

KEY DISTINCTION

Guard the title; give away the tools

GUARD	GIVE AWAY
Coach	Coaching tools
Coaching relationship	Powerful questions
Training and ethics	Intentional listening
Confidentiality	
Defined process	

The church became more careful with the title and more generous with the posture.

Two lanes, one destination

1. Lane 1: Formal coaching ministry
2. Lane 2: Coaching tools in everyday discipleship

→ Coaching culture in discipleship

FORMAL COACHING MINISTRY

Lane 1: Abundant Life Coaching

1. Find a coach
2. Intake session
3. Defined round of sessions
4. Follow-through and consistency

What protected the lane

- Certified coaches
- Confidentiality boundaries
- Regular coach alignment
- Clear member/nonmember expectations

What created understanding

Announcements created awareness. Demonstrations created interest and understanding.

Chat Question

“For those of you connected with churches, what has helped people understand coaching most effectively: explanation, testimony, demonstration, or personal experience?”

CULTURE-BUILDING

Lane 2: Coaching tools in everyday discipleship

Consultants and cohorts → Staff, board, ministry leaders, Life Group leaders, congregants → Relationships already happening

Asked of every participant

Bring coaching tools into family, coworkers, neighbors, faith conversations, teams, and Life Groups.

Asked of leaders

Ask powerful questions and resist assuming you are the expert in every conversation.

What has changed? What is still changing?

What has changed

- A recognizable place for coaching
- Clearer language
- Trained coaches
- More leaders using questions before answers

What is still changing

- Consistency in everyday ministry
- Clear role changes
- Culture beyond the program
- Boundaries between coaching and other helps

